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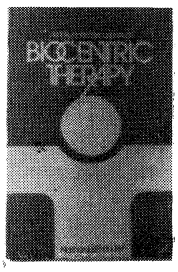
AN INFORMAL DISCUSSION OF BIOCENTRIC THERAPY

By Nathaniel Branden



In 1973 I was completing my graduate studies in behavior modification at Rutgers University. Along came a playful, yet distinguished looking fellow to speak to our Friday morning seminar. He started out by describing himself as a student of psychotherapy. He then went on to tell his tale of the adventure-filled profession of psychotherapy, citing anecdotes and clinical vignettes to give flavor to his theoretical postulates. While his use of "mentalistic" jargon was disconcerting, I had a difficult time dismissing him, for what he said seemed so logically correct and rang so personally true.

It is ironic that now, nearly two years later, I am asked to review a pamphlet entitled, *An Informal Discussion of Biocentric Therapy*. The irony is that this pamphlet is based upon that talk at Rutgers.

One of the problems in reading or listening to Dr. Branden is believing that behavior and attitudinal change occurs in biocentric therapy at the great speed portrayed. As one who has had extensive opportunity to observe what really happens (and true to impartiality, regardless of the quantity of his cookies I have consumed), I can only report that his claims are accurate.

This pamphlet presents a clear and cogent summarization of the Branden style of psychotherapy. Principles of therapy are traced to postulates of biocentric psychology which are fully covered in his three books. Thus one gets a sense of the continual flow from theory to practice.

Since the readers of this review are by and large familiar with Dr. Branden's theories, I will summarize them very quickly. The key to man's psychology depends upon his distinctive means of survival as an organism —his ability to think. Thinking however, is a voluntary enterprise. (To prove this point one may introspect, read Dr. Branden's arguments, or better yet, ponder what comes out of Washington!) When men distort thoughts or feelings, they do so in an attempt to cope with felt challenges to their psychological or physical survival. The overwhelming need of men is for self-esteem: to verify to themselves that their method of functioning is appropriate to reality, to the requirements of their survival and well being.

Dr. Branden has privately confessed to me that the real reason that people develop psychological problems is in order to meet him! For public consumption, however, he offers the following thoughts in *An Informal Discussion*:

Neurotic behavior is nearly always prompted by the need to maintain self-esteem in the face of data which, if fully experienced, would be a threat to that esteem. Individuals protect their self-esteem from environmental blows in diverse ways. One common way, known as a reliable technique of both psychiatry and judo, is to avoid the struggle. To give in is not to admit that one is defeated, but rather to assert that one "didn't try." The implication is that at any moment one could reconsider, give it a go, and be successful. This is known as the helplessness ploy. Another is the self-condemnation gambit. To say, "I am no good," is to at once say, "Don't expect anything of me," and, "Don't tell me I'm bad because I have already said it!" Case histories are used to illustrate how psychological survival may be propagated through helplessness, suffering, and other stratagems.

Solving these life problems depends upon achievement of four interrelated goals which are the targets of biocentric therapy: (1) self-awareness, (2) self-acceptance, (3) self-responsibility, and (4) self-assertion.

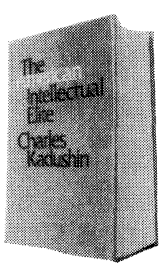
Self-awareness involves allowing oneself to experience all feelings as well as judgements, ideas, et cetera. Self-acceptance means acceptance of unpleasant attributes of the self as facts of reality at the time of evaluation. Self-responsibility involves acceptance of oneself as the chief cause of one's current behavior and the chief agent of change. Self-assertiveness involves acting upon one's needs, desires, and evaluations. In realizing these objectives one builds self-esteem.

The specific means by which these four principles are passed on to clients in biocentric therapy are also covered in *An Informal Discussion*. Topics discussed include: (1) explicit teaching, (2) insight or understanding, (3) emotional release work, and (4) client behavioral experiments.

All in all, this pamphlet is a gem. The organization of assumptions and deducements is so logically clear as to render the arguments cogent even to a person such as myself, trained in a radically different tradition. Am I entirely convinced? No—but he has me thinking! REVIEWED BY DAVID KANTOROWITZ / **Psychology** (14 pages) / **LR Price $1.25**

THE AMERICAN INTELLECTUAL ELITE

By Charles Kadushin



Like most interesting books, *The American Intellectual Elite* should not be taken too seriously. The reviews of it that I have seen have not been kind, but Kadushin asked for their taunts by claiming too much for his effort right on the first page: "While not the kind of history a historian might write, the book as it now stands is a sociological history of leading American intellectuals of the late 1960s."

Nonsense. What Kadushin has really turned out is (1) a fascinating piece of introspection on the part of a narrow and ingrown group of big name writers and editors, and (2) a game.

First, the game. It is fun to play because the rules make room for cattiness, even meanness. Kadushin asked a couple of hundred literary (as opposed to scientific or industrial) "intellectuals" for their nominations to a hypothetical pantheon of super-elite intellectuals. Out of these nominations he compiled a list of "The Seventy Most Prestigious Contemporary American Intellectuals," circa 1960. Since Kadushin invites my mud—"the reader is welcome to try a do-it-yourself analysis of the list"—I will hurl it with pleasure.

To me, the list is laughable; it is filled with over-the-hill old boys (and old girls) whose heyday was the 1950s. In the top 20 are such names as Irving Howe, Lionel Trilling, Edmund Wilson, Hannah Arendt, Richard Hofstadter, Saul Bellow, and Irving Kristol. The smell of amber mingles with the smell of Polident.

Would you believe that the intellectuals voted Leslie Fiedler into the top half of their "most prestigious" list? Or John Gardner, for God's sake? (When I first saw John Gardner's name on the list, I thought surely they must mean the novelist John Gardner, not that windbag at Common Cause, but I discovered later in the book that, sure enough, they mean Old Windy himself.) Or I. F. Stone, the toy in the intelligentsia's box of Cracker Jacks?

Would you believe that the list includes Richard Rovere, whose letters from Washington in *The New Yorker* sound as though they had been written on soiled doilies? Or Seymour Martin Lipset, whose literary style is reminiscent of pied type?

What an incredible list.

No, not incredible if you remember that these are the *New York Review of Books-New Yorker-Commentary* folks talking about themselves. They are a tight and isolated and inward-looking little island. Overwhelmingly they are Jewish. Predominantly they are New Yorkers, either in point of home or point of publication. Overwhelmingly they are liberals in the vague post-World War II way, and most of them write for vaguely liberal journals. (Buckley did not make the list.)

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Kadushin— *(Continued from page 1)*

But do not blame the sterility of the list on ideology or ethnicity; the blame must rest with mental gravity. The intellectuals polled by Kadushin have grown to intellectual ripeness under the same tree from which they fell. They did not roll. They were not harvested. They sat and shriveled. Expansiveness is not their style; looseness is not their style. They think in cliches—though perhaps more profound cliches than you and I are prone to. From Noam Chomsky to Reinhold Niebuhr, their list of 70 elite is one long cliche. It is very much like the "10 Most Admired" list that Gallup cranks out periodically; the Top 10 are simply the first 10 famous names that the man in the street can remember, which accounts for the constant scoring, even in disgrace, of Billy Graham and Richard Nixon. The Top 70 list has the same deficiency.

There are several other lists in the book that give important, if discouraging, insight into the world of super-eggheads. From his hundreds of conversations, Kadushin put together a list of "Leading Influencers of American Intellectuals on the War in Southeast Asia, 1970." Ready? Get a good grip on that chair. Okay: David Brinkley. You think I am lying, but it's true. That other great expert on Vietnam, Chet Huntley, is also on the list, as are that profound fellow James Reston; that unbiased soldier of literary fortune, Richard Goodwin; and Joseph Alsop, among others.

Ah, Alsop's appearance on the list of influencers puzzles you, doesn't it? But that is because you do not understand how our great intellectuals sometimes do their reasoning. Kadushin explains: "Others specifically mentioned Joseph Alsop as a person they follow closely in order to think the exact opposite of what he says!"

But now to return to the other half of *The American Intellectual Elite*'s treasure, its introspective summation of this group's contribution to the debate on the important issues of our time:

On racism. Says Kadushin: "Intellectuals here do not differ from the public in the way they formulate the issues, nor do they as it turns out, have especially distinctive opinions. Discouragement and befuddlement are common reactions in this area.... Most of the intellectuals we interviewed were followers, not leaders on issues in the race relations field."

On Vietnam. As late as 1970 a majority of the intellectuals in this study did not want a sudden withdrawal—which put them solidly in step with the mainstream of America—and did not oppose the war for moral or ideological reasons, but merely because it "wasn't working." Again, as Kadushin points out, "the public was not basically different from the intellectual elite" in its reaction to the war.

Judging the intellectuals on the basis of these two most important issues, and on the basis of their reaction to student riots and all the rest of the upheaval in the 1960s, Kadushin concludes:

> Perhaps the most salient fact is that they were neither gurus nor sages, prophets nor sons of prophets. The majority was reacting to events, rather than predicting them or even creating them through the impact of their ideas. That is, the intellectual elite in their conversations about social issues for the most part had little more to say than what might be heard in the cocktail party conversation of intelligent, well-educated people.

This should make us all the more grateful to learn from Kadushin that only about 30 percent of these intellectual big shots had any regular contact with men of power in government. Things could be worse.

In its low-key, scholarly way, this is a book worth having around to provide those refreshing sneers when you are feeling low. These intellectuals are, as a group, irritatingly deficient in really creative responses to practical problems. They whimper eloquently; they bitch magnificently; they condemn uproariously; they malign with éclat and élan. But when one looks to them for guidance, they disappear into the mountaintop mists, like Moses off to speak with God. Norman Mailer (one of the top 10 on the list of 70) was entertaining, after a fashion, when he described Lyndon Johnson as "the expression of the near insanity of most of us." But that was, if original, not true; and, in any event, it did not help us cope with those awful years. REVIEWED BY ROBERT SHERRILL / **Intellectual History** (395 pages) / **LR Price $8.95**

ENQUIRY CONCERNING POLITICAL JUSTICE

By William Godwin

Nearly two hundred years ago, a man sought to respond to the argument of Edmund Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France*. He did so in the form of a lengthy and elegantly written treatise on political philosophy, and he endeavored to provide a comprehensive case for liberty by building on a brilliant foundation: the right of independent, private judgment. "The universal exercise of private judgment is a doctrine so unspeakably beautiful," he wrote, "that the true politician will certainly feel infinite reluctance in admitting the idea of interfering with it."

When these words were first penned, progress was considered by everyone to be synonymous with the triumph of liberty. Indeed, politics *was* "the science of liberty."

But as they travelled down the troubled road of the nineteenth century together, Politics and Liberty reached a fork. Liberty took one path, and Politics another. The "unspeakably beautiful" doctrine was overshadowed by a cloud which signified that a terrible storm lay ahead on the road of mankind's history. That storm was the triumph of statism; Liberty was rarely heard from again.

Symbolic as this is, even more so was the fate of the author of the above quotation: William Godwin. For Godwin was born in 1756, when liberty was on everyone's mind; his early career was illustrious, and he published his treatise, *Enquiry Concerning Political Justice*, in 1793, experiencing a burst of fame and growing influence. Soon afterward, however, his star began ominously to fade until, by the time of his death in 1836, both he and his doctrine had slipped into the obscurity which surrounds both to this day.

Godwin's treatise was full of paradoxes and contradictions: he became the father of both individualist and collectivist anarchism; he was a fiery individualist who endorsed altruism and utilitarianism, while at the same time promoting the independence of women; he was an economic egalitarian who nonetheless thought that men had no right to forcibly redistribute another's "excessive" wealth; and he was an anarchist who argued for government as a temporary expedient.

The *Enquiry* was his most significant work; K. Codell Carter has edited it somewhat for this edition, and has added a few appendices from Godwin's other writings, but nothing essential to Godwin's position has been omitted or changed. Here, then, stands the *magnum opus* of one of the great minds of the eighteenth century.

Godwin builds his case solidly on the foundation of individualism, of individual sovereignty. He tells us that "all the great steps of human improvement [have] been the work of individuals," and that "man is a species of being whose excellence depends upon his individuality, and who can be neither great nor wise, but in proportion as he is independent." To protect that independence,

> Every man has a certain sphere of discretion, which he has a right to expect shall not be infringed by his neighbors. This right flows from the very nature of man.... No man can be justified in setting up his judgment as a standard for others.... [Man] must consult his own reason, draw his own conclusions, and conscientiously conform himself to his ideas of propriety.... For that purpose each must have his sphere of discretion. No man must encroach upon my province, nor I upon his. He may advise me, moderately and without pertinaciousness, but he must not expect to dictate to me. He may censure me freely and without reserve; but he should remember that I am to act by my deliberation and not his.

It is on the basis of these principles "that what is commonly called the right of property is founded." Godwin thinks—and repeats constantly—that you should act to benefit others, and that you should give away property in excess of your needs, but stresses again and again that there should be no use of violence—either individual or governmental—to achieve these ends:

> We should set bounds to no man's accumulation. We should repress by wise and effectual, yet moderate and humane penalties, all forcible invasion to be committed by one man upon the acquisitions of another.... Force is an expedient, the uses of which is much to be deplored. It is contrary to the nature of intellect, which cannot be improved but by conviction and persuasion. It corrupts the man who employs it, and the man upon whom it is employed.

But this does not mean that Godwin is a pacifist:

> Violence is so prompt a mode of deciding differences of opinion and contentions of passion, that there will infallibly be some persons who will resort to this mode. How is their violence to be repressed, or prevented from being accompanied occasionally with the most tragical effects? Violence must necessarily be preceded by an opinion of the mind dictating that violence; and, as he who first had resort to force instead of argument, is unquestionably erroneous, the best and most desirable mode of correcting him, is by convincing him of his error. But the urgency of the case, when, for example, a dagger is pointed to my own breast or that of another, may be such as not to afford time for expostulation. Hence the propriety and duty of defense.

Godwin even concedes that there might be room for government:

> Every man... has a sphere of discretion; that sphere is limited by the coordinate sphere of his neighbor. The maintenance of this limitation, the office of taking care that no man exceeds his sphere, is the first business of government. Its powers, in this respect, are a combination of the powers of individuals to control the excesses of each other.

This, however, is only a temporary bow to government authority:

> We should not forget, that government is, abstractly taken, an evil, an usurpation upon the private judgment and individual conscience of man-

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INTRODUCTION TO MUSICAL LISTENING: A GUIDE TO RECORDED CLASSICAL MUSIC

By John Hospers

PART IX: ORATORIO AND OPERA FROM HANDEL TO WAGNER

Among the works of the early period of opera, I would call special attention to "Il Ritorno de Ulysses in Patria," by Monteverdi, on Turnabout 34131 (3 records); "Incoronazione di Poppea," by Monteverdi, on Seraphim S-6073 (2 records); "Juditha Triumphans," by Vivaldi, on RCA VICS-6016 (2 records); and most satisfying of all to my taste, "Castor and Pollux," by Rameau, on Telefunken 9584/7 (4 records).

Georg Frederic Handel (1685-1759) was a German composer who spent most of his life in England. His numerous oratorios will be considered together here (a few of them are sometimes performed as operas), although some of them should be classified as sacred rather than secular music, depending on their subject-matter. Doubtless his "Messiah" is his greatest work, in its depth of feeling, richness of texture, and great multitude of immortal arias and choruses. Which recording you prefer will depend on whether you prefer performances with small orchestras and choruses such as existed in Handel's day or the more massive modern ones. My own preferred recording, a compromise between these two extremes and an extraordinarily sensitive performance, is the one by Colin Davis on Phillips SC-71AX300 (3 records). An introspective, moving performance by a smaller orchestra and chorus is by Scherchen on Westminster 8163 (3 records), but there is no lack of first-rate performances other than these.

MOZART: THE MAGIC FLUTE / (3 records) / **LR Price $17.39** (List $20.94)

VERDI: AIDA / (3 records) / **LR Price $17.40** (List $20.94)

In much of Handel's oratorio music the listener is (at least initially) likely to be annoyed by the numerous solo recitatives which keep the narrative going but are of minimal musical value. However, the rewards of Handel's other oratorios are so great that one can easily put up with (if not enjoy) these intermittent passages in order to hear the gems that come after. In my opinion, Handel's oratorio, "Saul," is almost up there with "Messiah" in overall greatness, and not far behind come "Solomon," "Judas Maccabaeus," "Israel in Egypt," and "Theodora"; and not far behind come "Samson," "Semele," "Alexander's Feast," "Ariodante," "Julius Caesar," "Hercules," "Rodelina," and "Rinaldo." There are some arias and choral passages in each of these works that are as thrilling as anything in the "Messiah," but they are just not as densely distributed. The immensity of Handel's productivity—unknown to that vast majority of listeners who know him only by a few airs from the "Messiah"—is staggering, almost as great as Bach's. Every one of these oratorios contains melodies of great directness and simplicity, but with an emotionally moving quality that strikes directly at the heart. One could listen to Handel oratorios every day for months and discover new gems each day.

And now we come to modern dramatic opera as we know it today. The first great master of it, Mozart, is (in the opinion of many critics) the supreme all-time master of opera, outdoing even his own great chamber and orchestral works. Mozart, in the immense prodigality of his genius, wrote numerous comic operas which have never been matched in their genre: "The Abduction from the Seraglio," "Idomeneo," and best of all, "Cosi fan Tutte." But the three operas which all would list as among the finest ever written are "The Marriage of Figaro," "Don Giovanni," and "The Magic Flute." "Don Giovanni" is a perfectly unified and coherent piece of operatic construction, finished in every detail, and with the music perfectly fitting the story; to see it is a great aesthetic experience. There are currently five listings of it in the Schwann catalog, of which my own favorite is on DG 2711006 (4 records), because of the combination of Böhm's sensitive conducting and Fischer-Dieskau's fine singing as the Don.

But the Mozart opera that I prefer to any other is "The Magic Flute." This is his last great work, which he was still singing to himself on his deathbed at the age of 35. Its plot is silly, and it is much more disconnected in detail than "Don Giovanni," but its arias are without peer—such utter simplicity of melody, yet with such unerringly moving effect (a combination matched only in melodies by Handel and Purcell), makes me tend to agree with George Bernard Shaw that the melodies from this opera are "the only melodies ever written that would not sound out of place coming from the mouth of God." If the term "melodic beauty" applies anywhere, it applies here. The delicacy of line and phrasing of this work is best brought out by Solti (again with Fischer-Dieskau) and "Mozart: The Magic Flute" (3 records).

The early nineteenth century produced many fine operatic composers. Gaetano Donizetti (1797-1848) wrote many operas, of which the best known is "Lucia de Lamermoor," with five good recordings available. Recently Beverly Sills has made Donizetti's "Maria Stuarda" and "Roberto Devereux" known again through her memorable performances. During his short life, Vincenzo Bellini (1801-1835) was a prolific opera composer. His "Norma" is his most famous and probably his best; vocally the best performance is by Callas on Angel S-3615, sonically best is Sutherland's on London 1373. Bellini's "I Puritani" also has many breath-taking arias (Sutherland on London 1381). Gioacchino Rossini (1792-1868) wrote numerous delightful operas, mostly comical, of which I prefer "Semiramide" (London 1383) and "The Barber of Seville" (London 1381). Beethoven wrote only one opera, "Fidelio," but it surely ranks among the best (Angel S-3773). And "Carmen," by Georges Bizet (1838-1875) is surely among the most singable, tuneful, and sprightly operas in existence (Angel S-3767). A neglected masterpiece, until revived in recent performances, is "Mefistofele," by Arrigo Boito (1842-1918); the monumental "Prologue in Heaven" alone is well worth the price of the set (London 1307).

The two opera composers who dominate the nineteenth century are Verdi and Wagner. Guiseppi Verdi (1813-1901) is usually held to be (and I agree) the overall greatest opera composer of them all, considering the great quantity combined with the uniformly high quality of his work. He wrote more first-rate operas than anyone else, and more of them are performed each year than those of any other composer. Verdi is a total master of matching the music to the story; he also has deeper characterizations than Mozart, and he is equally at home in melting lyricism and stark dramatic power. His acknowledged greatest operatic masterpieces are "Aida" (available from *LR* in a three-record set by von Karajan with Tebaldi and Bergonzi), "Il Trovatore," "La Traviata," "Otello," and "Falstaff." There are so many good recordings of each of these—and your choice will depend so much on which soloists you prefer—that I shall say only that the supreme master of Verdi conducting was Arturo Toscanini, and anyone lucky enough to get a copy of his discontinued mono performance of "Otello" has a rare treasure—perhaps the greatest live performance of an opera ever committed to records. Only slightly less noteworthy are "Rigoletto," "La Forza del Destino," "Ernani," "Don Carlos," "Nabucco," "Macbeth," and "Un Ballo in Maschera." Even Verdi's earliest operas are full of ravishing melodies. As with Handel's oratorios, one could spend many months listening with enjoyment to nothing but Verdi operas. He is the operatic composer par excellence, blending perfectly story, character, and music. He can give you a lavish spectacle a la Gabrieli and then just as expertly a deep probing introspective scene a la Monteverdi (such as the "Willow Song" and "Ave Maria" from "Otello") that stuns you with its emotional impact. For an excellent introduction to the Verdi style on a single record, get either of the records entitled "Verdi Choruses," London 25893 (conducted by Franci) or RCA LSC-2416 (conducted by Robert Shaw).

By contrast, the operas of Richard Wagner (1813-1883) are like long symphonies in which the soloists are instruments in the orchestra. While Verdi is in the great Italian vocal tradition from Monteverdi to Bellini, Wagner is in the German symphonic tradition of Beethoven, Weber, and Brahms. One has only to hear the masterly counterpoint in the prelude to "Die Meistersinger" to realize what a master of structure he is; and his uncanny ability to achieve mood-effects is evident in, for example, the ethereal prelude to "Lohengrin," the "Good Friday Spell" from "Parsifal," and the recreation of the feeling of impending doom in the prelude to Act 3 of "Tristan und Isolde" (so intense as to make the skin prickle). Unfortunately today the preludes are usually heard in isolation from the operas of which they are a part. One should hear, and preferably see, the opera; Wagner considered the story and the visual spectacle to be as important as the music. From his early opera, "Der Fliegende Holländer," to his last one, the Easter opera "Parsifal," they all bear the touch of the master of composition and orchestration. His most perfect work is undoubtedly "Die Meistersinger" (Karajan on Angel S-3776, 4 records); Paderewski, doubtless with some exaggeration, called it "the most perfect

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Hospers — *(Continued from page 3)*

work of art ever created in any medium." If one sees only one opera of Wagner, it should be this one. "Tristan und Isolde" is more intense and harmonically interesting, but it is overlong and many passages are dull, as is indeed the case with other operas of his which are still great ones, such as "Lohengrin" and "Tannhäuser."

But Wagner's most unique achievement, nowhere else even approached in music, is his cycle of four operas "Der Ring des Nibelungen" ("Das Rheingold," "Die Walküre," "Siegfried," and "Die Götterdämmerung"), which is in effect a 16-hour-long symphony. There are at least 150 major musical themes, or leit-motifs, in this cycle, and by the time you get to the last half-hour of the last opera so many of them are going at once, carrying such emotional impact accumulated gradually through the previous operas, that the listener is overwhelmed. Each one is so integrated into the fabric of the music and the story (Wagner wrote the libretto too) that one often knows from the music being played what the character on the stage is thinking. The incredible richness of texture that results from these interacting and interlocking themes must be heard to be believed. The operas should be seen (or heard) in their proper order, since the thematic material from the first opera is developed in the following three. I have seen the entire "Ring" cycle at least twenty times, and there is nothing like it in music, from the opening of "Rheingold" at the bottom of the Rhine to the immolation-scene and final holocaust at the end of "Götterdämmerung" alone a five-hour performance). I suggest getting the Solti recordings (on London records) of all these operas. The primitive savagery and fiery intensity of the music are better conveyed by Solti than by any Wagnerian conductor since Furtwängler. (*Next month: Opera and Song of the Past Century.*)

Godwin — *(Continued from page 2)*

> kind; and that, however we may be obligated to admit it as a necessary evil for the present, it behooves us, as the friends of reason and the human species, to admit as little of it as possible, and carefully to observe, whether, in consequence of the gradual illumination of the human mind, that little may not hereafter be diminished.

And, with that unquenchable optimism:

> With what delight must every well-informed friend of mankind look forward to the auspicious period, the dissolution of political government, of that brute engine, which has been the only perennial cause of the vices of mankind, and which... has mischiefs of various sorts incorporated with its substance, and no otherwise removable than by its utter annihilation.

Naturally, all of this is only part of the story; Godwin's treatise spans every subject from human psychology to religion to the futility of revolution. His doctrine of utilitarianism and general belief in some form of egalitarianism undercut his argument, but as the reader can judge from the quotes reprinted here, Godwin's doctrine is one very much worth investigating. We have, after all, seen the consequences of man's turning his back on the "unspeakably beautiful" doctrine of independent judgment, and on justice. In that sense, Godwin seems to be speaking more to our time than to his own, and this is why he is so worth studying:

> It is an old observation, that the history of mankind is little else than a record of crimes.... Though the evils that arise to us from the structure of the material universe are neither trivial nor few, yet the history of political society sufficiently shows that man is of all other beings the most formidable enemy to man. Among the various schemes that he has formed to destroy and plague his kind, war is the most terrible. Satiated with petty mischief and the retail of insulated crimes, he rises in this instance to a project that lays nations waste, and thins the population of the world. Man directs the murderous engine against the life of his brother; he invents with indefatigable care refinements in destruction; he proceeds in the midst of gaiety and pomp to the execution of his horrid purpose; whole ranks of sensitive beings, endowed with the most admirable faculties, are mowed down in an instant; they perish by inches in the midst of agony and neglect, lacerated with every variety of method that can give torture to the frame.... If this be the unalterable allotment of our nature, the eminence of our rational faculties must be considered as rather an abortion than a substantial benefit....
>
> Certainly every man who takes a dispassionate survey of this picture, will feel himself inclined to pause respecting the necessity of the havoc which is thus made of his species, and to question whether the established methods for protecting mankind against the caprices of each other are the best that can be devised.

In his *Enquiry Concerning Political Justice*, William Godwin paused, and questioned. I think that one might profitably spend a few evenings alone with this work doing the same. REVIEWED BY R. A. CHILDS, JR. / **Political Philosophy** (370 pages) / **LR Price $6.50**

REVOLUTION & ROMANTICISM

By Howard Mumford Jones

It is surprising that there have not been more studies written detailing the connection between revolution and romanticism. For although not all romanticists were politically radical (some were in fact quite reactionary), the strain of revolutionary thought in romantic writing is too strong to be simply a matter of coincidence. To cite a few ready examples: Byron would die in the cause of liberty. Schiller was often in trouble with the authorities in the early part of his career for his plays vigorously protesting political and social injustice and oppression. Much of Shelley's poetry is fervently radical. Delacroix's famous *Liberty Leading the People* is just one of a number of paintings he did on revolutionary themes. Hugo, who spent 20 years in exile for his political activities, openly and gladly linked, in his *Reply to an Act of Accusation*, the rebels of romanticism with the ideals of the French Revolution.

Despite such evidence of the revolutionary fervor of the romanticists, studies of the relationship between the two are relatively uncommon. Of that small number, Jones's *Revolution & Romanticism* is the latest and perhaps the most accessible for the layman.

Jones concentrates on the two great political upheavals of the eighteenth century, the American and French revolutions, and on the romanticists of Great Britain, France, Germany, and, to a lesser extent, the United States.

Jones points out that the American Revolution was born less out of an attempt to overthrow an unsupportable tyranny than it was out of philosophy. The Declaration of Independence and the Constitution would, "whatever their defects, unify a philosophy of the state and of the individual and emphasize the freedom of the self rather than the subordination of individualism to status" as in the semi-feudalism of Europe. "In the New World the individual was now made the primary foundation of a philosophic state." What the American revolution accomplished, and the French attempted (and despite its excesses partially achieved), was to transform "subjects into citizens."

Still, however much the American patriots and the men of 1787 may have been political revolutionaries, they were in many important respects very much classicists. Washington became the new Cincinnatus; Jefferson's Monticello is classicism in architecture; and David painted his austerely neoclassical *The Death of Marat* in 1793, at the height of the French Revolution.

In "a society infiltrated by ideas of emancipation and liberty," as Hugo called it, the task remained for the romanticists to enlarge the political concept of autonomy to encompass the whole man. The romanticists found "a new formula for the individual—*le moi romantique*." This involved a revaluation of the concept of the ego, a new valuation of self, an emphasis on the uniqueness of each being.

The romantic *moi*, which is the central focus of *Revolution & Romanticism*, manifested itself in several different ways: the concept of romantic individualism (emphasizing differentiation over standardization), the doctrine of the romantic genius, and the romantic rebel. Perhaps *le moi romantique* can best be expressed through the mythic figure of Prometheus, who was without a doubt one of the favorite characters of the romanticists. Herder wrote a poem entitled *Prometheus Bound*, and later Shelley wrote his huge lyric drama *Prometheus Unbound*. Byron too wrote a poem on Prometheus; Goethe left a fragment. Liszt composed a symphonic poem on the same theme. Even Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley got into the act, subtitling her little romance, *Frankenstein*, "The Modern Prometheus." Unlike Aeschylus' drama of frustrated defiance, the romantic conception of that hero is more encouraging, based on the idea that Prometheus brings, to use Herder's words, "the flame of man's eternal quest to know more, to better himself and the world around him." The message, while still clearly defiant, becomes hopeful rather than despairing.

Revolution & Romanticism has several faults. Perhaps the major one is a disorganization of material. For example, the discussion of Prometheus occurs not in the section on the romantic rebel, as one would expect, but instead in the more general chapter on the romantic individual. There are, besides, too many digressions and a good deal of extraneous material.

However, read critically (and what book should not be!), *Revolution & Romanticism* offers much insight into the significant relationship between the political and artistic upheavals that shook that age. The twentieth century is still feeling the effects of those upheavals. And today, when the concept of individualism is—to say the least—beleaguered, it is well to remember that the "great, the unique contribution of romanticism to modernity is the insistence that every human being is a distinct and autonomous entity, whatever theories of education or of sociology or of political science or of evolution may say to the contrary." REVIEWED BY JESSE F. KNIGHT / **Intellectual History** (490 pages) / **LR Price $15**

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FRANKENSTEIN

By Mary Shelley

Frankenstein, the author explains in the subtitle, is "The Modern Prometheus." Mary Shelley wrote the novel hoping that it would find merit as a ghost story in the eyes of her famous husband, Percy B. Shelley, and their friend Lord Byron. What she produced at the age of 19 is a literary classic that goes far beyond the boundaries of a fantasy designed to chill the spinal fluid on some dark night.

The daughter of William Godwin, father of modern anarchism, she had long been exposed to arguments which revealed the dangerous, indeed, monstrous, visage of the State. As the second wife of that Promethean poet, Shelley, with whom she eloped while he was still wedded to his first wife, she sought for self-identity in a world which surely condemned her passion and would never quite forgive her.

Nurtured on sublime poetry and transcendental themes, including the quest for human purpose and the love of those who most sincerely invoked a higher and a better human passage than we yet know, Mary Shelley wove a fantasy containing elements of science fiction, romance, murder, and revenge.

The account is a flashback in which the narrator, in a series of letters, recounts the story told to him by a strange wayfarer, Victor Frankenstein, who is rescued from an ice-floe in a state bordering on dissolution.

Critics have read into the account as many themes and plots as can be found in Milton's *Paradise Lost* or Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound*. Mary Shelley was familiar with Greek mythology and with the enchanting themes still forming the background, strophe, and antistrophe of contemporary conflict and high drama. But in a sense, *Frankenstein* is also the story of Mary Shelley's own hopes and fears, her sense of fitness and unfitness, her grand passion and despair. The immortality of her brilliant intellect and the flaws accompanying any kind of imposed morality provide the duality with which she deals. She sees herself as victoriously creating something good, Victor Frankenstein, her Prometheus. In allegory, she creates the beatific visage of the ideal human, who is not human. But the non-human is more human than its creator, more to be loved and pitied than Victor in his victory.

Whether intending it or not, Mary Shelley describes the triumph of the men who devise and support the State, only to have the State take on a life of its own, a humanness that "outhumans" its devisers. As the State struggles to do the good things it intends to do, it is condemned by its own inhumanness and becomes progressively monstrous. The creature endowed with immortality will have to destroy itself. And because it is humanly inhuman, this is what it will do—although at the end we are left with a vague uneasiness that perhaps the monster still roams the earth and has not yet constructed its own bier nor applied the match to rid us of its presence.

Frankenstein by Mary Shelley will continue for years to be the thrilling ghost story she intended. It is also much, much more. REVIEWED BY ROBERT LEFEVRE / **Fiction** (224 pages) / **LR Price $.75**

THE COUNT OF MONTE CRISTO

By Alexandre Dumas

There is a very special kind of pleasure, a very special kind of emotional fuel to be had from exposure to Romantic fiction. Actually, of course, it is available only to a special kind of reader—one who shares certain of the key attitudes which distinguish the Romantic tradition in fiction from others. In a very important sense, there is no such thing as an objectively interesting, an objectively stimulating, or an objectively exciting work of art. What interests, stimulates or excites one is a function of one's values. And in the case of art, it is a function of what one regards as significant about human existence. Fiction which is romantic in the Randian sense can offer an experience of extraordinary intensity to a reader who sees free, value-motivated, causally significant human action as one of the really important features of human life. And such a reader has a real treat in store for him in Alexandre Dumas, *père's The Count of Monte Cristo*.

As is the case with too many Romantic novels, *The Count* is something of a mixed bag: the leading portrayers of free, value-motivated, causally significant human action have been too much concerned with their subject matter and not enough concerned with their technique. The result has been novels of extraordinary human achievement as regarded by thoroughly ordinary or even sub-ordinary minds—stories of violent action in behalf of glorious values, cluttered by irrelevant facts and marred for the romantically-inclined reader by a colorless, pedestrian narrative style.

Since the edition of *The Count* under consideration here is a translation (this reviewer does not read French), no comment about Dumas' style is possible. But the irrelevant details—what William H. Gass calls the uselessly precise facts—are there in abundance, at times almost threatening to bog the narrative down.

Almost, but not quite. For the focus of attention in a Romantic novel is on plot, and the plot which holds *The Count of Monte Cristo* together is, with all the above qualifications taken into account, a joy to behold. Edmond Dantès is framed by his enemies, each of whom is seeking something different: Ferdinand Mondego is Dantès rival for the hand of Mercédès; Danglars, is Dantès's professional rival; the innkeeper Caderousse and the petty politician Villefort are seeking short-range wealth and short-range influence. Together they secure the conviction of Dantès on charges of aiding the exiled emperor, Napoleon Bonaparte. Dantès is imprisoned for 14 years in the dungeons of the Chateau D'If. How he escapes and successfully seeks revenge on the men who wronged him is the balance of what—if you believe that heroism will out, that efficacy and flamboyance can win ends never possible to deceit and bribery, and that nothing can stop a man of ability—is a breathtakingly interesting, stimulating, and exciting novel. REVIEWED BY JEFF RIGGENBACH / **Fiction** (557 pages) / **LR Price $7.90**

THIS PERFECT DAY

By Ira Levin

Occasionally, one comes across a book which, for one special personal reason or another, one would very much wish to have written. For me, such works would include Isaiah Berlin's *Historical Inevitability* and C.S. Lewis' profound Christian-libertarian novel, *That Hideous Strength*. Another is Ira Levin's beautiful book, under belated review here. *This Perfect Day* has been something of an underground libertarian sensation for a while now, its fame spread by word of mouth by those who, like myself, have enjoyed it immensely, to those whom they would like to see share in their pleasure. It truly deserves to be read by everyone, especially by any libertarian who may be looking for an exciting and marvelously crafted novel and what the British reviewers call "a really good read."

This is a "dystopian" (or negative utopian) novel, a new form for Levin, but one in which he has instantly become a master: in my view, *This Perfect Day* outshines Huxley's *Brave New World* and Orwell's great *1984* in a number of ways. First of all, in the greater political and cultural perspicacity: it is Levin's projected future society that we have to fear and not Orwell's Stalinist-infected nightmare or Huxley's confused amalgamation of statism and the hedonistic consumer society. Into the world of *This Perfect Day*, Levin has woven with a fine hand the likely extrapolations of the prevailing strands in the contemporary world: total collectivism, regimented and mechanized through the misuse of computers, chemicotherapy, and other scientific advances; the ideology of "love" (in the Erich Fromm-John Lennon sense), used to crush all individuality and individual rights; a world-state run by a self-appointed elite, self-defined as "benevolent," where Marxist and Christian opponents of the free society no longer hold mere brotherly dialogues, but have coalesced their creeds; and a vision of the role of "mental health" specialists that could have come from Thomas Szasz.

Secondly, Levin's is superior to the two earlier works, in my opinion, in all the elements of novel-building: in plot, stylistic virtuosity, and characterization. In regard to this last trait, he has a lovely way of being *fair* to characters who are not ultimately right (like Julia, the uptight Christian businesswoman), or who are downright villains (like Wei, a Chou En-lai figure—that is to say, a civilized and witty swine—superbly drawn). As for the hero, Chip, let me just say that he is a full human being, a brave Adam, easy to love, and the exhilarating quality of his heroism is reminiscent of no one in contemporary fiction (if one were to choose) so much as McMurphy in Kesey's *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (except that Chip *wins*). One would like to have known Chip.

The conception of *This Perfect Day* is brilliant, the execution flawless, and there is a continuing intelligence presiding over the whole work; besides, as anyone who has read Levin's previous books—for instance, *Rosemary's Baby* or *A Kiss Before Dying*—can testify, he really knows how to tell a story. If you want to do yourself a favor, read *This Perfect Day*. REVIEWED BY RALPH RAICO / **Fiction** (320 pages) / **LR Price $1.50**

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ALBERT JAY NOCK:

Bring together the shades of Erasmus, Shakespeare, and Goethe and try to imagine what they would do. Play poker? Visit the stock exchange? Absurd! They would talk together. The precious converse of noble minds is the most truly human of all human relations (I know, I know!), and demands at least as much artistry as Kreisler brought to the Mendelssohn Concerto. It need not be argued that Albert Jay Nock belongs on the same plane as the aforementioned to assert that he was of their spirit and that he did bring a considerable finesse to any discussion. Nock loved good talk; kindled by a responsive companion he was a brilliant conversationalist. He loved good food as well, but a meal was primarily a means of lubricating the flow of ideas. To the table he brought a mind trained and tuned to concert pitch, a mind well stocked with ideas gleaned from great literature and broadened by wide experience here and on the Continent.

Nock's ideas were perhaps not so original as he was, but he had made them his very own; his thinking ran along lines quite at variance with the familiar channels scooped out by the popular pundits of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Having framed his convictions independent of any school or party, he was able to view the intellectual passions and battles of the day with clinical detachment. Consequently, he appeared to many of his contemporaries as a man of monumental prejudices, almost an anachronism.

ON DOING THE RIGHT THING / 249 pages / **LR Price $12.75**

MEMOIRS OF A SUPERFLUOUS MAN / 326 pages / **LR Price $2.85**

SNORING AS A FINE ART / 196 pages / **LR Price $11.75**

FREE SPEECH AND PLAIN LANGUAGE / 342 pages / **LR Price $12.25**

THE BOOK OF THE JOURNEYMAN / 154 pages / **LR Price $9**

Convictions or prejudices, Nock orchestrated his brilliantly, and would on occasion—I am told—discourse over food barely touched while his dinner companion downed a hearty meal. "Lingering over the table," writes Felix Morley, "we touched on many subjects, all of them irradiated by the light of his brilliant mind and mellowed by the warmth of his personality." "Ideas never failed him," Ellery Sedgwick adds. "Others have their storehouses of learning, but Nock's mental files were available on the instant. The classics, all of them one might say, French memoirs, learning polite and impolite, everything neatly classified and pigeonholed."

All this is as it should be. In "The Decline of Conversation," an essay in the collection entitled *On Doing the Right Thing*, Nock remarks that "The civilization of a country consists in the quality of life that is lived there, and this quality shows plainest in the things people choose to talk about when they talk together, and in the way they choose to talk about them." In good conversation there is a symphonic quality, themes and variations, a blending and harmony of widely ranging minds which take delight in ideas for their own sake, minds able to play freely over and around ideas without prepossession and willing to follow an argument wherever it leads them. In a debate there is a loser, but there is no victor in a discussion—only winners.

Nock projected some quality—we would call it charisma today—which caused those in his company to surpass themselves. "You find yourself coming out with things you didn't know you had it in you to say," recalls a friend.

Conversation is "a living with others," the dictionary tells us, "a manner of life." It is a cultivated way of handling leisure, and it has a synergistic effect on the people involved—provided they meet Rabelais' test, being "free, well-born, well-bred, and conversant in honest companies." For it is the amiable who shall possess the earth, sang the Psalmist (Ps. 37), not the sectaries who see things through the distorting lens of the ego and try to conscript every idea into the service of a faction. The True Believer cannot become a good conversationalist, for "conversation depends on a copiousness of general ideas and an imagination able to marshall them." It is an intellectual dance of reciprocal inspiration, exhibiting "a power of disinterested reflection, an active sense of beauty, and an active sense of manners." AJN thought of his *Freeman* as a sort of conversation, "a fellowship of fine minds in all parts of the globe."

Nock came into full possession of his powers during his editorship of *The Freeman* (1920-1924), from his fiftieth to his fifty-fourth year. He had had a solid grounding in the classics at St. Stephens, and his valedictory address to the class of '92 reveals a remarkably disciplined mind for one so young. He went on to earn a graduate degree in theology, then furthered his education informally during the next two decades by reading and travel—steeping himself in the worlds of scholarship, culture, and affairs. As his inner life ripened, the visible man followed suit, slim, poised and assured, impeccably attired—a commanding presence. He became the Albert Jay Nock his friends knew during his *Freeman* days and after: a man of immense reserve, a person around whom legends cluster, a writer whose erudition and prose style earned him a select following—larger now than the corporal's guard he had a generation ago. It was not in him to become a popular thinker and writer; he wrote for the Remnant and tried to do a solid body of work for the future. "The first rate critic's business," he wrote, "is to anticipate the future, work with it, and look exclusively to it for his dividends." The future Nock worked for is catching up with him!

Nock was a virtuoso in these matters, and we shall not see his like again. But we can follow his development as meticulously set forth by the man himself in *Memoirs of a Superfluous Man*. This book (the title of which summons up Turgenev) is not an autobiography in the usual sense of that term. Every suggestion that he write a book about his life was rejected with annoyance—until a friend suggested "a purely literary and philosophical autobiography." Nock fell in with this notion because, as he said, "every person of any intellectual quality develops some sort of philosophy of existence; he acquires certain settled views of life and human society; and if he would trace out the origin and course of the ideas contributory to that philosophy, he might find it an interesting venture." Thus, the *Memoirs*, "the autobiography of a mind in relation to the society in which it found itself."

Nock closes his final chapter, privacy still intact; but the attentive reader's mind has been subtly invaded, and it would be a dull fellow indeed who could deny that the hours spent with this book were not among his most memorable reading experiences. Nock discourses on education, literature, women, politics, economics, religion and death, and he does so in matchless, eighteen carat English prose, spiked with apt quotations and laced with allusions. Nearly a lifetime of reflection had been spent on each of the topics here aired, and this book is Nock's final statement and testament. It is the book by which he will be finally judged, the one in which he himself took most satisfaction. It is a book to be enjoyed and then mastered; and as the dyer's hand is stained by the medium he works in, so does the magic of the *Memoirs* work on a person's whole outlook and philosophy.

NOCK'S FREEMAN HAS an enviable reputation in American journalism, ranked as the high-water mark by many. After four glorious years it ceased publication with its issue of 5 March 1924, having bade farewell to its readership a month earlier. An item in AJN's final "Miscellany" column offers a rueful reflection on contemporary civilization. Nock notes that deep grooves are worn in the wooden counters of the change booths in the older elevated-railway stations, and muses, "There seems something symbolic about them. They are in their way, a testimony to the nature of our civilization; they are our counterpart of the grooves worn in the stone steps of European cathedrals by the feet of innumerable devotees." With this parting shot he left these shores to live and work abroad for long periods during the following fifteen years. These were fruitful years, marked by his brilliant Rabelais scholarship, his classic essays on Jefferson and another on Henry George, his book on the State, a journal, and numerous articles in magazines like *Harpers*, *The Atlantic*, and *The American Mercury*. World War II brought him permanently back to these shores, where he lived his final years.

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OUR GENIAL CRITIC

A month before his death he wrote to a friend, "I have been really quite ill, feeble and worthless, and have now reached the point of letting the quacks roll up their sleeves and do their worst.... I'll keep you informed, or some one will, but I foresee I shall not be writing much at length. On his last day Lord Houghton said, 'I am going to join the majority, and you know how I always did prefer the minority.' Witty fellow!" The minority lost AJN on the nineteenth of August, nineteen hundred and forty-five.

It is Nock's attitude toward life that chiefly interests us, the demands he put upon it, his expectations of what it had to offer him, his tactical approach as he sought to avail himself of its bounty. Open the *Memoirs*. It is a fair presumption that the quotation Nock selected for the title page of this book had a special meaning for him. We read the familiar testimony of Sir Isaac Newton: "I do not know what I may appear to the world, but to myself I seem to have been only like a boy playing on the seashore and diverting myself in now and then finding a smoother pebble or a prettier shell than ordinary, whilst the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered around me."

THE SEASHORE IS broad enough to support a related analogy, having to do with the search for truth. This time imagine that the man at the water's edge is blind. He has just been told that a message of enormous importance from someone he loves is written in the sand in Braille, and that the incoming tide will soon obliterate it. There is no time to spare, so waste no motion. Loss of vision has keyed up the man's other senses, and the heightened expectancy generated by this crisis situation pushes alertness and sensitivity still higher. But he restrains himself. He knows that if he thrusts his fingers too rudely against the sand his contact with the letters will erase them; so he gets himself out of the way and deliberately, with the utmost delicacy, eases his hands over the sand until he establishes tactile contact with the Braille, at which point he brings all his finesse into play and lets the message seep through his fingertips.

This points to the attitude or posture of alert-passivity, or interest-affection, which some people are occasionally able to bring to bear. Nock exemplified this kind of receptivity no matter what his immediate preoccupation—writing, reading, editorial work, convivial relations. "They have helped the truth along without encumbering it with themselves," said Artemus Ward of men of Nock's stripe. Nock was fond of quoting this sentence, for it defined his style and suited his temperament. Would his style have been different if Nock had been one of Sheldon's mesomorphs inclined toward somatotonia? The speculation is vain. He was what he was, and we can say only that bodily make-up and chemistry did not stand in the way of his characteristic approach.

Most of our contemporaries are arrayed at the other side of the fence. They are what H. G. Wells used to refer to as "gawdsakers." Nervously apprehensive that the world is about to go to hell in a handbasket, the typical Modern runs around yelling "For gawdsake let's do something!" He has wearily accepted the joyless task of straightening the Cosmos, and the first step is to improve others. The incomparable Dewey gave us marching orders when he announced a new role for the intellect. No more for us the old delights of knowledge to be enjoyed for its own sake; mankind has come of age, having graduated "from knowledge as an esthetic enjoyment of the properties of nature regarded as a work of divine art, to knowing as a means of secular control.... [Nature] is now something to be modified, to be intentionally controlled."

Nock would have none of this, for he knew that a culture which denies or perverts the claims of intellect and knowledge will pay dearly for it. So, within the limits of his native reserve, he took a refined delight in people and things as they really are, to be enjoyed for their own sake. He knew that joy is not only the first fruit of the spirit but the first business of the critic as well; "his affair is one only of joyful appraisal, assessment, and representation." These words are from the essay on Artemus Ward. Nock goes on to say, "that for life to be fruitful, life must be felt as a joy; that it is by the bond of joy, not of happiness or pleasure, not of duty or responsibility, that the called and chosen spirits are kept together in this world."

Underlying an attitude such as this is a profound confidence in the cosmic process. The Universe is biassed in our favor, so we are entitled to enjoy the scene while nature takes its course. This is not dull passivity; it is akin to the alert-passivity a skilled horticulturalist displays as he nurses along an exotic bloom in order that the plant might become what it really is. The Reformer forgets that only God—or Nature—can make a tree—or a society. Society is not some entity that can be gotten at directly to improve it; a good society is a bonus, a by-product of men and women pursuing with some measure of success the life-goals appropriate to human nature. If the major social instincts and drives are not given harmonious and balanced expression the society is warped and unlovely as a result. The social drives in Nock's catalog are five in number, and he indicts modern culture for allowing the claims of only one of them. The claims of intellect and knowledge have been disallowed; likewise the claims of beauty and poetry, religion and morals, social life and manners. Only the instinct for making money and getting on in the world has been turned loose, he charges, and a civilization mired in economism is the consequence. It follows that society cannot be improved by working on the level of events; once things have gotten this far they are in the past tense. Reformers work on events, which is why the world is periodically wrecked by those who set out to save it. Talleyrand, watching one such series of events unfold, remarked sarcastically, "I knew that man would save the world, but I did not know he'd do it so soon!"

The only enduring reforms are those which take place below the surface of events; that is where the future is being born. And all you can reform there is yourself—provided you start early enough and live long enough. The only thing you can do for "society," Nock concludes, is to present it with one reformed unit. Having sounded this hopeful note, what was Nock to do except declare for superfluity?

It is not Nock's way to make a point by means of a philosophical disquisition; his teaching method is parabolical. He let people alone and he let things alone because there are forces at work in them which make for integration and growth if we do not interfere. Interfering comes naturally, letting things alone is an acquired skill. A taste for this skill seeps in as we begin to understand how vast are the regions beyond conscious human control and how well things function in those realms.

TURN TO THE essay entitled "Snoring as a Fine Art" found in the collection bearing that title. General Kutusov commanded the Russian forces arrayed against Napoleon. There is no question about Kutusov's competence or his courage, but why did he not provide some action? Why did he not engage the French army head-on and give Napoleon a thorough trouncing? Why did he snore through staff meetings? Well, Nock contends, it was because the general was playing his hunches; he "sensed" what the little Corsican was going to do—and that is what Napoleon did! The French made one blunder after another—as Kutusov knew they would—and virtually engineered their own defeat.

The point is that some people have the ability to quiet the conscious intellect and let other parts of the mind supply guidance. Nock is more nearly on his own ground when he cites the instance of Wordsworth. "Wordsworth unquestionably had something; and when he was content to leave that something in charge of his poetical operations—when he resolutely bottled up the conscious and intellectual Wordsworth, and corked it down—he was a truly great poet. When he summoned up the conscious Wordsworth, however, and put it in charge, as unfortunately he often did, the conscious Wordsworth was such a dreadful old foo-foo that the poetry churned out under its direction was simply awful."

Nock does not disparage the intellect and the "knowing" peculiar to it when he writes: "Socrates knew nothing, and was proud of it. He carried the magnificent art of Not-Knowing to the legal limit, and oh, my dear friend, what an incomparably great and splendid art that is!"

It has been pointed out by Michael Polanyi and others that there is a tacit dimension in all knowledge, that in any epistemological situation we actually know more than we are consciously aware of. A great diagnostician examines a case and, in addition to observing specific symptoms, takes in the patient as a whole before offering his conclusion. After the conscious intellect has done its job you work from the "gut," the place where you store your "useless" knowledge.

(Continued on page 8)

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Nock — (Continued from page 7)

The essay entitled "The Value of Useless Knowledge," found in the collection entitled *Free Speech and Plain Language*, draws a sharp distinction between Pedantry and Culture. "The pedant's learning remains too long on the surface of his mind; it confuses and distorts succeeding impressions, thus aiding him only to give himself a conventional account of things, rather than leaving his consciousness free to penetrate as close as possible to their reality, to see them as they actually are.... Culture's methods," on the other hand, "are those of exercising the consciousness in a free and disinterested play over any object presented to it." And this, Nock affirms, "means acquiring a vast deal of useless knowledge, and then forgetting it." Nock is talking about residual knowledge, so thoroughly known that we do not need to attend to it; it attends to us. Analogously, years of training have educated a pianist's fingers to the point where, if he tried to direct them individually over the keyboard, they would rebel and refuse to play even the simplest melody. It is not to diminish the role of the conscious intellect to point out that there is layer upon layer of mind below the intellect, and that for some purposes the intellect must be stilled if we would avail ourselves of this pool of "useless knowledge." When this thought finally sinks in, the Social Planner with his "rational controls" will be an extinct breed. Adam Smith's Invisible Hand can be trusted, the market works, there is coherence in the nature of things, and its wisdom is put at the service of those willing to cooperate with it.

An essay in *Snoring* invokes the court jester to illustrate the tactic. The jester, because of his outlandish appearance and his wry humor, could say things to the king which would cost the court philosopher his head if he uttered them. Today's counterpart of the fool is the cartoonist and newspaper paragrapher; Nock says he gets more sound sense out of these men than from the editorial writers, for the best of them have "an intuitive sense of the plain natural truth of things," and they deliver it up to us in a mode we can accept. "They arouse no animosities, alarm no pride of opinion, nor do they seek to beat a person off his chosen ground—under their influence his ground imperceptibly changes with him."

Suzanne LaFollette was the editor of *The New Freeman*, which began publication with the issue of 15 March 1930 and ran for a little more than a year. Nock contributed "Miscellany" under the pseudonym Journeyman. *The Book of Journeyman* appeared later that year under the imprint of *The New Freeman*. Every time Nock had our culture in his sights he did not like it much, calling it an idealess world. Education, music, manners, religion, business, politics—his raillery played over them all. He surveyed Europe and came to realize that everything about it that he admired came out of a philosophy opposed to his own. Besides sound theory, he muses, you have to have the right kind of people to work it, and where are you going to get 'em? We look for a new formula when what is needed is a new vision, a *Weltanschauung* which opens doors to the emergence of the human potential.

In the course of this survey we have picked up only a few bits and pieces as we have skirted the shore of the main body of Nock material; the next step has to be total immersion. He is to be read, mainly because he is fun to read; even when he is wrong he is delightful. Most of the time he is right, I believe; his judgements are sound. And the spirit and temper which pervade his pages gently nag at the reader until he agrees that "educate" is not a transitive verb. The only education is self-education, and Albert Jay Nock has already blazed that trail. REVIEWED BY EDMUND A. OPITZ.

AN AFTERWORD FROM

"A Note of Disappointment"

I would like to register a note of disappointment. I was quite appalled by some of the things I read in your November 1974 issue.

We were given Kaufmann's viewpoint that justice makes sense only in the context of religion, and that the purpose of laws is to "alter people's behavior." This totalitarian formula was cited by Masters without objection or qualification. Evidently he approves. Elsewhere Masters seems totally unable to trace the connection between volition and morality.

In another article, Thomas Johnson calls *Future Shock* "one of the most thought-provoking books to come out in many a year." So was *Das Kapital* in its day, but one would hardly commend it to a reader without pointing out some of its grave defects. I have not read Toffler's book, but I did see an interview with Toffler on TV. Toffler makes many dire predictions which may well come true, for only a free economy could prevent them, but Toffler's own solution is extensive government intervention. To recommend Toffler's book in a libertarian publication and not point this out is ridiculous.

I feel that when you promote such views under the banner of libertarianism, you do your readers a disservice. I believe many readers share this feeling, and will not continue to support you if the situation worsens. We get this sort of thing every day in the popular press and on TV. We do not need to turn to LR for this purpose.

PAUL D. CHRISTOFFERS
Frederick, Md.

Letters from readers are welcome. Although only a selection can be published and none can be individually acknowledged, each will receive editorial consideration and may be passed on to reviewers and authors. Letters submitted for publication should be brief, typed, double spaced, and sent to LR, *410 First Street, S.E., Washington, D.C. 20003.*

"Kaufmann's Worst"

I would like to express to you my dismay with the review Robert Masters wrote of Kaufmann's *Without Guilt and Justice*. This work is Kaufmann's worst. It has numerous faults and some flagrant philosophical errors. But that is not the crucial point—other offerings of *LR* have had similar problems. What is disturbing is Mr. Masters' totally uncritical review of a work that undermines some of the most crucial features of a decent human community. It is disgraceful to produce a review that leaves unexamined so many problems in so weak a book. (Compare his review with Werner J. Dannhauser's brief but devastating review in a recent issue of *Commentary*. Dannhauser is a Nitzsche scholar, like Kaufmann, and teaches government at Cornell University.)

TIBOR R. MACHAN
Fredonia, N.Y.

Masters & Johnson Reply

Walter Kaufmann's ideas are revolutionary, and I am not surprised that they have provoked a violent reaction in some quarters. What does surprise me is the failure of Kaufmann's critics to address themselves to any of his arguments.

Dr. Machan alleges that *Without Guilt and Justice* "has numerous faults and some flagrant philosophical errors" and "undermines some of the most crucial features of a decent human community." It seems to me that when someone makes charges as grave as these, it behooves him to support them with some sort of evidence or reasoning. Machan offers no evidence and no reasoning.

The review in *Commentary*, in my opinion, is far from "devastating." Dannhauser's main objection seems to be that Kaufmann has the audacity to criticize Plato, Kant, Hegel, and Marx.

I have no idea why Mr. Christoffers views as "totalitarian" the idea that the purpose of laws is to alter people's behavior rather than to give people what they deserve. It seems to me that the world would be considerably less "totalitarian" if governments would stop trying to achieve "justice"—whether distributive justice, as in welfare programs, or retributive justice, as in most wars—and devote themselves, instead, to the simple business of deterring people from committing acts of aggression. (Similar views have been expressed by libertarians far more distinguished than myself. See, for example, Ludwig von Mises, *Human Action*, third revised edition, pp. 720-22; *Theory and History*, pp. 51-55, 82-84.) If Christoffers has some *reason* for considering justice essential to libertarianism, I wish he would state that reason. Instead, like Machan, he offers mere angry pronouncements.

If these letters represent the best the defenders of justice can do, then clearly Kaufmann is right: justice has no future.

ROBERT MASTERS
New York, N.Y.

In my essay-review of the book, *Learning For Tomorrow*, I mentioned in passing that *Future Shock* was one of the most thought-provoking books to come out in many a year, a point criticized by Paul Christoffers. I would make that statement again, without feeling it necessary to warn free-market libertarians, who are the readers of *LR*, that they must be forewarned concerning Toffler's statist views. Libertarians are quite capable (most of the time) of recognizing collectivist ideas (with one glaring exception being the lack of recognition by many libertarians—including both Murray Rothbard and Ayn Rand—of the collectivist nature of the philosophy and system of education), and my implied recommendation of Toffler's book, briefly mentioned in my review of another work, needs no apology or qualification.

If one were to restrict *LR* to comments on only libertarian books it might well be difficult, at this time, to fill its pages. Fortunately this excellent publication presents discerning and knowledgeable reviews of many works which are thought to be of interest to freedom-oriented individuals. The book which I reviewed, *Learning For Tomorrow*, is anything but libertarian in regards to the views held by its contributors. But this does not in any way mean that this book is not

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(Continued on page 10)

Readers, Authors, Reviewers

worth considering (it is!). We can therefore hope that *LR* will continue to bring to our attention any book or publication that is of value to thinking libertarians.

I subscribe to LR and will continue to do so.

THOMAS JOHNSON
Fredericksburg, Va.

Swan Songs

To omit "Swan Lake" from a description of Tchaikowsky's ballets, as John Hospers does in his "Introduction to Musical Listening" of your November 1974 issue, is to omit the sun from a description of the wonders of nature. If the "Nutcracker" is "filled with enchanting singable melodies," "Swan Lake" is an abundance of them—enough enchanting singable melodies to last a lifetime. I am more than curious about whether this (in my opinion) disastrous omission was purposeful on Professor Hospers' part.

EMILIA NORDTVEDT
Haledon, N.J.

The "Nielsen Test"

I am glad to see that the music of Carl Nielsen has at last achieved recognition in a libertarian publication. However, Nielsen deserves more than the five lines that John Hospers allots to him. His 3rd Symphony ("Sinfonia Espansiva") is perhaps the most exciting and exhilarating musical work that I have ever heard, a work which exudes optimism by virtue of the ever-present forward motion, the way that menacing elements gradually turn into components of that motion and lose their menace, and the exuberant and confident way in which Nielsen flings large masses of sound at his listeners. I'm sure that reactions to this work could be used as an effective test for identifying closet libertarians. (Bernstein's recording, Columbia MS6769, is superb.) Nielsen's 4th Symphony, whose subtitle could do service for many of his works, "The Inextinguishable," also has much of the same appeal, as do the 1st and 5th symphonies and the violin concerto. I also highly recommend Robert Simpson's book, *Carl Nielsen, Symphonist*, as a highly perceptive, though of necessity quite technical, analysis of what Nielsen was doing in his major works and how he did it.

JAMES D. MCCAWLEY
Chicago, Ill.

Hospers Replies

Having seen "Swan Lake" several times (once in the Bolshoi Theater), and heard it many times more, I can enthusiastically endorse it as one of the great ballet scores. The omission of it from my list of Tchaikovsky's ballets was quite unintentional.

As to Carl Nielsen, I am indeed most enthusiastic about his symphonies 3, 5, and 6 especially, but would not be willing to describe him as the greatest of twentieth-century composers, as I would unhesitatingly describe his fellow Dane, Carl Dreyer, as the greatest of all film directors.

There are many musical masterpieces of which I can only say "Space does not permit. . . ." For example, the De Falla Concerto in D for flute, Harpsichord, etc., mentioned by Michael Dunn in a letter in *LR* a few months back, has long been one of my favorites.

JOHN HOSPERS
Los Angeles, Calif.

From the Authors—and an Editor. . .

Thank you for sending me a copy of the October 1974 *LR*, containing Walter Block's review of my *Guide to Rational Living* and *Humanistic Psychotherapy*. I am delighted to see this review appear, and think that it beautifully and concisely presents some of the main points that I tried to make in both books.

I find practically all your reviews exceptionally well-written and well-informed. There is no other publication that keeps me better in contact with the modern libertarian literature than *Libertarian Review*. Keep up the good work!

ALBERT ELLIS
New York, N.Y.

Thank you for your kind letter. . . and the copy of the review of my book. [*On the Democratic Idea in America*, *LR*, October 1974.] It is thoughtful and flattering, and I am naturally pleased.

IRVING KRISTOL
New York, N.Y.

Many thanks to you [for the review of *More Joy* in the November '74 *LR*]. I was always a bit concerned at the return-to-the-womb bit in most California "grok" ideologies, and as a good anarchist, I didn't want to make like a penile Billy Graham. Also I'm tired of the Marxist idea that revolutionaries need be blue-nosed puritans. The new sort won't be. . . . Anyhow, glad you enjoyed it.

ALEX COMFORT
Santa Barbara, Calif.

Conservative Vampires & The Middle East

I was somewhat surprised and quite pleased to read Dr. Lilienthal's book reviews in *LR* [January 1975].

While libertarians reject use of force, conservatives constantly demand use of force—must force settlement in Mid-East, must force others to sell oil for $1 per barrel, and so on. The only solution for all problems favored by that vampirish, blood-thirsty lot is to go to war and kill.

Economic facts of the matter—our continuing inflation and ability to export inflation—are totally ignored. The U.S. is able to buy without really paying, and it faces strangulation. The main cause is. . . Nixonomics.

We need a Ludwig Erhard or a Jacques Rueff; what we are more likely to get is a Robespierre and a Napoleon.

HANK FREEMAN
Pueblo, Colo.

"Mash Note"

You may consider this to be a mash note. I love *Libertarian Review* without restraint or moderation. The reviews are scholarly, incisive, and as even handed as a philosophy so passionately held will allow.

All my best to all of you.

KEN SCHMIDT

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Vivien Kellems, RIP

On 26 January, death claimed Vivien Kellems, an indefatigable champion of justice and a woman of uncommon grace, intelligence, and beauty.

I met Vivien Kellems in 1971, a decade after her retirement from the Kellems Cable Company, a successful industrial corporation she founded in the 1920s. She had just led a "citizens revolt" against the Connecticut state income tax, which resulted in repeal of the tax by the same session of the state legislature that had passed it just a few months earlier.

Long before Wilbur Mills met his Waterloo at Washington's Tidal Basin, he encountered a "bombshell" in the person of Kellems, who, as the nation's most vigorous crusader against the discriminatory income tax rates levied on unmarried persons, frequently appeared before the House Ways and Means Committee. While losing the war, Vivien won a great many skirmishes along the way. I recall her glee in describing a pleading phone call from Mills, who implored her to restrain her thousands of followers from inundating his office with that time-honored symbol of tax resistence, the used tea bag. The bags were wreaking havoc on the mail-opening machinery of the House of Representatives!

Kellems' first skirmish with the IRS came when the federal withholding tax, a "temporary" World War II measure, was not repealed, and the Kellems Cable Co. stopped withholding federal income taxes from its employees. The IRS seized the corporate bank accounts. But Kellems, usually acting as her own attorney, won a landmark case that forced the IRS to release her company's funds.

When Vivien died, at age 78, the federal and Connecticut state governments had pending against her levies of well over $100,000 which she refused to pay until she was reimbursed the amount she had been "penalized" for being unmarried. The legal skirmishes were as complicated as they were endless, but Kellems loved the battle, and she never tired of relating, with a twinkle in her eye, that her legal expenses were being paid with the money that she refused to surrender to the tax collectors.

Whenever the cause of justice appears hopeless, I will recall this magnificent, spirited woman and her heroic achievements. And I will be sustained.—RDK

A Word To Our Readers

■ *LR* has a limited supply of two articles by Vivien Kellems reprinted from *Human Events*, which we will be happy to send free on a first-come, first-served basis to readers who request them. If you are placing an order, write "Kellems articles" on the coupon. Otherwise, send a stamped, self-addressed No. 10 envelope.

■ Laissez Faire Books (206 Mercer Street, New York, NY 10012) continues its program of lectures, courses, and films in April. On tap are: **Lecture.** 25 April, Jerome Tuccille, "Who's Afraid of 1984? The Case for Optimism in Looking Ahead to the 1980s." An autographing party for Tuccille's new book, *Who's Afraid of 1984?*, will follow the talk. (Time, 7:30 P.M.; fee, $5.) **Films.** 5 April, *The Mouse That Roared*; 19 April, *Queen Kristina* (Greta Garbo). (Each film showing is at 7:30 P.M. Cost: $3 each.) **Course.** Beginning 2 April and continuing every successive Wednesday evening at 7 P.M. until 4 June, Jerome Tuccille, "Who's Afraid of 1984? The Case for Optimism in Looking Ahead to the 1980s." (The fee for all 10 lectures is $35. The first two may be attended individually for $4 each.) For more information and reservations, contact Laissez Faire Books.

■ The December 1974 *Libertarian Forum* carried a lengthy reply by Steven Goldberg to Lynn Kinsky's objections to his book, *The Inevitability of Patriarchy*. (Goldberg's comments are given an explanatory introduction by *LF* editor Murray Rothbard.) Interested readers can obtain a copy of the December *LF* by sending $1 and a self-addressed envelope to *Libertarian Forum*, PO Box 341, Madison Square Station, New York, NY 10010. (Subscriptions to *LF* are available at $8 per year.)

■ Bargain-hunters will find another book and two records available this month at *LR*'s cost. The cloth edition of Heinlein's *Time Enough for Love* is now priced at $4.77; Alexis Weissenburg's performance of Rachmaninov's Third Piano Concerto is available for $2.96; and the recording of Arturo Benedetti Michelangeli's performances of Rachmaninov's Fourth Piano Concerto and Ravel's Piano Concerto in G Minor (for the left hand alone) is priced at $3.15.

REVIEWERS FOR THIS ISSUE: Roy A. Childs, Jr. is an *LR* associate editor. **John Hospers** is Professor of Philosophy at the University of Southern California, an aesthetician of note, and an *LR* associate editor. **David Kantorowitz** is a doctoral candidate in clinical psychology at Rutgers University. **Jesse F. Knight** is a free-lance writer whose work, both fiction and non-fiction, has appeared in many journals. **Robert LeFevre** is the founder and past president of Rampart College and the author of many books and articles, including *The Philosophy of Ownership* and *The Nature of Man and His Government*. **Edmund A. Opitz** is on the staff of the Foundation for Economic Education, a sustaining strand in the fabric of the Remnant, and—it is rumored—the Invisible Hand of the Nockian Society. **Ralph Raico** is Assistant Professor of History at SUNY, Buffalo, New York. **Jeff Riggenbach** is book reviewer for the Los Angeles all-news radio station, KFWB. **Robert Sherrill** is Washington correspondent of *The Nation* and a prolific writer on American politics.

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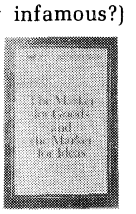
THE MARKET FOR GOODS AND THE MARKET FOR IDEAS

By R. H. Coase

This is the essay made famous (or should we say infamous?) in Objectivist circles by Ayn Rand's attacks on it in two of her *Letters* last year. Read it. Decide for yourself. Is it a subtle proposal for government regulation of the "market for ideas"? Or is it instead in the tradition of Swift's *Modest Proposal*?



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